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Large jet production boon expected: Forecast International

By [Mary Kirby](#)

Nearly 12,000 large commercial jet aircraft will be produced during the 10-year period through 2019, as Airbus and Boeing show signs of increasing production in the face of improving market indicators, research firm Forecast International predicts.

"If you had talked to me eight months ago, we would have probably fallen in with the general consensus that Airbus and Boeing were going to cut narrowbody numbers. Everybody expected them to. Suppliers expected them to. Independent people like ourselves did, and so did the trade press," Forecast International senior aerospace analyst Raymond Jaworowski tells ATI and Flightglobal.

"Airbus and Boeing adamantly said they were not going to cut production, and more recently they said 'never mind cutting them, we're going to increase numbers'. So we took a very detailed look at the market and we finally came to the conclusion that they just might pull it off."

The two major airframers will account for over 98% of the some 11,844 large jets - comprising narrowbodies and widebodies - expected to be produced between 2010 and 2019, according to Forecast International, which last year estimated a market for 9,879 large commercial jets for the 10 years through 2018.

It now says emerging competitors from China and Russia may begin to make "small inroads" into the market by the end of the 2010-2019 timeframe, and account for the remaining 2% of the estimated \$1.41 trillion market.

"Original equipment manufacturers seem to be looking at the traffic figures, which have been especially robust, especially in the cargo market, which is booming. Even though the general economy is still spotty, with traffic in Asia and the Middle East stronger than here [in the USA] and Europe - and there was a blip because of the volcanic ash programme that will prove to be a temporary aberration - traffic figures are going great guns," notes Jaworowski.

"Another factor, despite all the damage done by order deferrals and cancellations, they [Airbus and Boeing] are still sitting on a mountain of narrowbody orders and that gives them a lot of protection. If they do make a mistake on build rates, they do have those big backlogs to fall back on."

Forecast International lists the [Bombardier](#) CSeries - which is targeted at the 100- to 149-seat market - as a regional jet for the purpose of its study. The CSeries "is not included in those numbers", says Jaworowski, as the twinjet straddles the regional jet and large airliner markets.

"The CSeries is truly a product that defies categorization in that it plays in both arenas. It was probably smart of Bombardier to do that, and very ambitious to grab opportunities from both markets," says Jaworowski, noting that there has been "a bit more order activity" for the CSeries, with a recent order from US operator Republic Airways Holdings, and rumours are swirling that Bombardier will announce further orders at the forthcoming [Farnborough air show](#).

Faced with a growing threat from the CSeries, Airbus and Boeing are considering re-engining their highly-successful [A320](#) and 737 programmes, respectively. "Airbus appears more intent on this approach than does Boeing, and Boeing has indicated that it might instead launch an all-new narrowbody should Airbus re-engine its A320 single-aisle series," notes Forecast International.

But crucial product decisions must also be made in the widebody sector. Boeing has a decision to make as to how best to respond to Airbus' new [A350 XWB](#), which has been positioned "to cover much of the payload/range spectrum that Boeing covers with both the [787](#) and the 777", notes the firm. "Thus, Boeing has been mulling whether it needs to upgrade or replace the 777 in order to stave off competition from the XWB."

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